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April 8, 2009 (Agenda)

Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission
651 Pine Street, Sixth Floor
Martinez, CA 94553

Fire and Emergency Medical Services Municipal Service Review

Dear Members of the Commission:

BACKGROUND

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act) requires that not less than every five years LAFCO prepare municipal service reviews (MSRs) prior to or in conjunction with sphere of influence (SOI) updates.

In accordance with the MSRs, LAFCO must prepare written determinations with regard to six factors: growth and population; present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services including infrastructure needs or deficiencies; financial ability of agencies to provide services; status of and opportunities for shared facilities; and accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.

In 2003-04, the Commission initiated the MSR/SOI update program. To date, the Commission has completed baseline reviews for 52 local agencies; baseline reviews are currently underway covering Central and West County cities and a number of other special districts.

A team of consultants and LAFCO staff are preparing the MSRs. The approach involves countywide, sub-regional reviews and agency-specific reviews. The MSRs provide an assessment of the range and adequacy of municipal services provided in the County, and serve as an important tool for LAFCO in fulfilling its legislative mandate to coordinate the efficient and logical development of local government agencies and services.

The Commission has made significant progress, having completed baseline reviews for over 55% of the agencies. The time required in preparing comprehensive MSRs/SOI updates, and the level of detail and analysis needed is greater than anticipated given the complexity of issues we are discovering. Further, we have used the MSR process as a means for correcting and digitizing agency boundary/SOI maps in GIS format. This work provides a foundation that should make future MSRs/SOI updates easier.

SUMMARY

On February 11, 2009, LAFCO held a workshop, at which time the MSR consultant Beverly Burr presented the Fire and Emergency Medical (EM) Services MSR report and various Governance Structure and SOI options. This report covers the following agencies: cities of El Cerrito, Pinole and Richmond, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (FPD), Crockett-Carquinez FPD, East Contra Costa FPD, Kensington FPD, Moraga-Orinda FPD, Rodeo-Hercules FPD, San Ramon Valley FPD and County Service Area EM-1 (CSA EM-1). In addition, the report includes information regarding various state and federal agencies, the County and private service providers for a comprehensive overview of services.

At the February workshop, the consultant provided an overview of the local agencies and their ability to provide services. The preliminary report included the State-required determinations, along with SOI and governance structure options and recommendations. The Commission was asked to provide comment, and direct staff to circulate the Public Review Draft MSR report.

The project team made revisions to the MSR report based on comments received at the February LAFCO meeting. Although State law does not specify a review period for MSRs, the MSR report was posted on the LAFCO website and circulated for a 21-day public review period. LAFCO received numerous comments from the affected agencies and the public. Burr Consulting has prepared a comment log and responses to comments. The MSR report and SOI recommendations will be presented to the Commission on April 8 for final consideration and approval. This report, along with copies of the public comments, the comment log and consultant's responses to comments are available on the LAFCO website at www.contracostalafco.org.

On April 8, the Commission will be asked to receive any final comments; accept the MSR report, adopt determinations, and update agency SOIs as presented in a separate agenda item.

LAFCO may, but is not obligated to, initiate changes of organization or reorganization (i.e., consolidations, mergers, dissolutions, formation of a new district or districts) based on the MSR findings.

DISCUSSION

The Fire/EMS MSR provides a comprehensive review of services provided by agencies under LAFCO's purview, including those cities and special districts listed above. The MSR report focuses primarily on public agencies and their ability to provide a range of municipal services. The MSR report also includes information regarding other local, regional, state, federal and private services providers to establish service relationships, quantify services, and provide a more comprehensive overview of fire and EMS in Contra Costa County.

In order to address the six factors, the MSR examines a number of factors and variables as highlighted below.

Service Providers and Service Areas

As indicated above, the report focuses primarily on three cities and eight special districts under LAFCO's purview. Information regarding other *local* (e.g., Contra Costa County Sheriff's Marine Unit), *regional* (e.g., East Bay Regional Park District), *state* (e.g., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection), *federal* (e.g., U.S. Coast Guard) and *private* (e.g., American Medical Response) service providers is included to provide a comprehensive overview of fire and EMS in Contra Costa County.

The MSR also includes overview and agency specific maps depicting agency boundaries, spheres of influence, service areas, State fire hazard severity zones (high, very high), fire stations (staffed, unstaffed) and unserved areas.

A somewhat unique factor is that fire providers' service areas differ from their jurisdictional boundaries as a result of automatic aid, mutual aid and contract service arrangements. The MSR notes that automatic aid is more extensive in Contra Costa County than in many other parts of California due to agreement by providers to implement countywide closest-resource dispatching in which the closest available crew is dispatched to an incident regardless of boundaries.

Growth and Population

Each local agency considers its customer base to be the residents, businesses, visitors, structures and open spaces in its service area, as well as those traveling through the area. The MSR evaluates the impacts of residential and job growth on fire and emergency medical services.

In 2008, there were approximately 1.1 million residents of Contra Costa County. Since 2000, this number grew by 103,000 (11%). Among the nine Bay Area counties, Contra Costa County experienced the fastest residential growth since 2000. Population in the County is expected to grow by 9,000-10,000 residents annually over the next 20 years (ABAG). The California Department of Finance projects a more rapid growth rate of 15,000-18,000 annually over the same period. According to ABAG, population growth in the next 10-20 years is expected to be highest in Brentwood, Oakley, San Ramon, Hercules and Richmond. The average number of residents per household and population densities varies by area.

In 2008, there were approximately 394,000 jobs in the County. According to ABAG, the job base is projected to grow by 7,000-8,000 jobs over the next 20 years, and is expected to outpace residential growth. The job ratio is highest in San Ramon and Walnut Creek, and is above-average in Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Lafayette. Over the next 20 years, the pace of job creation is expected to be greatest in Oakley, Brentwood, Pittsburg, Hercules and Antioch.

Planned or proposed development is most concentrated in the cities of Brentwood, Oakley, San Ramon, Concord, Richmond and Hercules. For the most part, fire districts or cities in growth areas collect development impact fees to finance new facilities. To ensure that growth does not impact service levels, fire agencies experiencing growth should charge appropriate fees and conduct growth planning. Recommendations are included in the determinations and detailed in the MSR report regarding agencies that should implement and/or increase development impacts fees.

In order to compare various indicators among fire providers, per capita indicators used in the MSR report are based on 24-hour population. The 24-hour population was estimated on both residential population and job base.

Service Demand and Adequacy

The volume and type of service demand varies between jurisdiction based on factors such as age of the population, access to primary health care, visitor counts, freeway miles, and risk of wildland fires. In addition, service demand can be affected by topography, land uses (i.e., type, scale and location of development), and other variables specific to each community.

In 2007, service providers in the County responded to over 83,000 calls for service, or approximately 228 service calls on an average day. A majority of these calls (72%) were medical emergencies and vehicle accidents. Fire agencies throughout the County provide first-response service to EMS calls, and typically arrive at the scene prior to arrival of the ambulance. Calls for fire-related events (structure, vehicle, wildland) and hazardous materials response accounted for 11% of incident volume; public assists, miscellaneous emergency and non-emergency calls accounted for 11% of all calls; and false alarms consisted of 6% of calls.

The report also discusses the various and unique service area challenges, such as windy, narrow, and/or decaying roads and topography in Danville, Diablo, Tassajara, El Cerrito, Moraga, Orinda, Rodeo and Hercules; traffic congestion in Pinole; complex boundaries and communication system challenges in Richmond; very high fire hazard severity zones and wildland/urban areas in Kensington; and fiscal challenges for CCFPD and EEFPD.

The number of services calls varies greatly among fire stations. The median fire station fielded 920 service calls in 2007, which equates to 2.5 daily incidents. The two busiest fire stations were Station 6 in Concord with 4,471 incidents annually (12.2 daily) and Station 70 in San Pablo with 3,868 incidents annually (11 daily). There were 17 stations with fewer than one call daily in 2007. The stations with lighter call volumes included two in MOFPD service area, six in ConFire (Lafayette, Concord, Walnut Creek and outlying on-call stations), one in KFPD area, two in SRVFPD service area, five in ECCFPD service area (Bethel Island, Byron, Knightsen and two stations in Discovery Bay), as well as the CAL FIRE station that serves wildland calls and provides contract service to ECCFPD.

Fire and emergency medical service adequacy measures presented in the MSR include staffing levels, response times, and Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings.

With regard to service levels, urban and suburban areas are mostly served by fire stations staffed 24 hours a days with at least three full-time personnel certified as firefighters and emergency medical technicians, except in Brentwood and Oakley where stations are staffed by two-person crews. Low-density and outlying areas are often served from unstaffed fire stations by on-call personnel with training but not necessarily certification. Most outlying and isolated areas lack the financial resources to staff fire stations 24 hours a day. On-call fire stations are the closest resources in Crockett (daytime hours), Port Costa, Clyde, Morgan Territory, and the Briones area, although more distant staffed fire stations may also be deployed to incidents in outlying areas. The Bethel Island, Knightsen and Byron areas are served by fire stations staffed with two-person, full-time crews.

All areas are served by ambulances staffed with two full-time personnel at least one of whom is certified as a paramedic and qualified to deliver advanced life support (ALS) services. The City of Richmond, ECCFPD and CCFPD offer basic life support (BLS) services but do not offer ALS services directly. In these areas, ALS services are typically available several minutes after the fire department arrives at an incident; privately-owned American Medical Response (AMR) delivers ambulance services. In all other areas of the County, fire departments offer ALS services directly when the first unit arrives at an incident. SRVFPD and MOFPD staff their own ambulance companies directly with certified paramedics, and all others rely on AMR.

National and state guidelines call for urban fire departments to respond within five to six minutes of receiving an emergency call at least 90% of the time. Fire departments in the County are typically unable to respond within these time frames due in part to the length of time involved in dispatching emergency calls. Industry guidelines call for dispatching of emergency calls within 60 seconds at least 95 percent of

the time. Actual dispatching times are substantially longer. Although such response times are achieved in many of the urban areas at least 50 percent of the time, fire departments in the County are not able to do so 90 percent of the time. Ambulances are required to respond within 10 minutes in Richmond, Danville and San Ramon; under 12 minutes in other urban areas; and 20 minutes in rural areas at least 90 percent of the time. AMR and SRVFPD responded within required time frames in 2007; MOFPD ambulance response times fell short due to data reporting problems rather than compliance problems.

Within the County, staffing levels are relatively high at Kensington FPD, Moraga-Orinda FPD and the City of El Cerrito, relatively low in East Contra Costa FPD and Contra Costa County FPD, and average elsewhere.

The MSR report provides analysis and various tables comparing service calls by type, per capita, and by fire station; response times and staffing.

Infrastructure

The MSR report assesses various infrastructure needs and deficiencies including dispatch communications connectivity, facilities and equipment.

The report provides an overview of the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) system and notes that the dispatch for fire and emergency medical calls is becoming increasingly regionalized and specialized. Further, dispatch technology and protocols have become increasingly complex. There are noted delays and needed improvements in the dispatch operations, particularly in west county. Technology and/or facilities may be needed to reorganize dispatch functions to ensure more timely 911 call processing times.

In addition, there are communication system deficiencies. A new wide-area radio system is being developed. The public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties are collaborating to develop an interoperable communication system. As members of the East Bay Regional Communications System Authority, the fire agencies are collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system.

The MSR report also presents an assessment of fire facilities and equipment. There are currently 79 fire stations serving the County, plus two fire stations at Concord Naval Weapons Station and fire stations for private fire brigades. Of the 79 fire stations, 34 are classified as in either good or excellent condition by their agencies, 34 stations are in fair condition, two are in fair-poor condition, and nine are in poor condition. At least 36 of the stations are more than 40 years old. The City of Richmond, ConFire, ECCFPD and MOFPD reported significant facilities needs for which repairs have neither been funded nor scheduled.

There are areas where additional fire stations are needed or existing fire stations are not strategically located due to growth, changing traffic patterns, funding constraints, boundaries, or other reasons. Such issues were identified in ConFire, City of Pinole, ECCFPD and SRVFPD. In some areas, fire stations are located in close proximity to another fire station. Given the high cost of operating a fire station, it is not efficient for fire stations to be located in close proximity to each other. There are four areas where full-time fire stations are located less than two miles apart from each other: along the boundary between Richmond and El Cerrito, along the boundary between MOFPD and ConFire, and in Martinez and Discovery Bay.

Fire agencies are encouraged to conduct response time and spatial analysis to analyze optimal fire station locations, to conduct long-term capital improvement planning, and to implement adequate impact fees to ensure that future facility needs in growth areas are funded.

Financing

The financial ability of local agencies to provide services is affected by available financing sources and financing constraints, as well as management practices. The MSR discusses the major financing constraints faced by fire service providers and identifies the revenue sources currently available to the service providers. Finally, it assesses the financial ability of agencies to provide services.

The MSR presents comparative analysis relating to operating costs, compensation costs and revenues. There are tremendous differences among the fire agencies in expenditures, funding sources and funding adequacy.

Operating costs vary greatly by agency. The countywide median operating and capital expenditures per capita cost was \$221. Costs were generally higher in the two agencies providing direct ambulance services; SRVFPD was \$393 and MOFPD was \$566 per capita. Per capita costs for KFPD, which does not provide ambulance transport services, was \$563, which is substantially higher than other fire agencies. City of Pinole (\$145) and ECCFPD (\$121) had the lowest per capita costs.

On average, employee compensation represents over 75% of agency expenditures. The MSR report notes that there are significant differences among the providers in terms of employee compensation. Salary comparisons were based on top step. Median salary for a firefighter with five years experience was \$83,362 in FY 08-09, including pay for planned overtime hours. Median pay was \$95,542 for paramedics in FY 08-09. Salaries are highest at the City of Richmond, ConFire, MOFPD and SRVFPD, where firefighters earn \$91,000 and paramedics earn \$100,000 annually. Those agencies that pay substantially less than the median include ECCFPD (\$53,000 annually) and CAL FIRE and EBRPD (less than \$50,000 annually).

In addition to salaries, there are employee benefit costs for active and retired employees. Existing commitments to pay pension and retiree health insurance costs carries significant liabilities for most fire service agencies as discussed in the report.

The three cities fund fire department operations primarily from their general fund revenues. The fire districts are funded primarily by property tax. As a funding source, property taxes are constrained by statewide initiatives that have been passed by voters over the years. Other revenue sources include fees (e.g., ambulance, impact), intergovernmental revenues and assessments.

Fire district property tax shares vary significantly, with KFPD and MOFPD receiving substantially high shares; and ECCFPD and RHFPD receiving relatively low shares. In some areas, cities have implemented extensive redevelopment projects, and growth in property taxes has accrued over the years to the redevelopment agency rather than the fire district. For this reason, property tax shares for ConFire in San Pablo and Pittsburg are substantially lower than in other areas, and ConFire revenues in these areas do not cover operating costs.

Several of the fire providers have imposed voter-approved special benefit assessments on parcels or dwelling units or special taxes to fund services, including RHFPD, KFPD, MOFPD and City of Pinole. In addition, with the exception of the City of El Cerrito, CCFPD, KFPD and SRVFPD, all fire agencies impose development impact fees on new constructions for the purpose of financing new facilities.

The MSR report concludes that, for the most part, all fire service providers have the financial ability to deliver services. With the exception of the City of Pinole, all agencies have a financial reserve. However, all agencies are plagued by ongoing fiscal constraints, including the economic climate, housing downturn and decline in property tax revenues, rapid inflation, along with unfunded capital needs and deferred capital and maintenance costs, aging facilities, and pension and employee benefit contributions.

The MSR showcases a number of best practices employed by agencies to address fiscal and service issues. Many of the agencies participate in automatic and mutual aid; share dispatch, radio, training, facilities and equipment; and participate in regional collaboration efforts.

Many of the fire agencies could benefit from additional practices including benchmarking, preparing long-term financial projections, and incorporating fiscal impact and sustainability analysis into negotiation of compensation terms.

In addition, the MSR report provides a number of Governance Structure options which could improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels. The options are further discussed in the SOI staff report.

Accountability and Governance

Several of the key factors LAFCO must address in its MSR are accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.

The MSR report evaluated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.

Conclusion

The MSR report notes that there are significant challenges in the delivery of fire and EMS services in the County and the need for more logical and efficient service areas, for communities to fund the service levels they desire, and for providing adequate service levels in growing urban areas.

A number of governance alternatives for the organization of fire and EMS services are identified in the report, including consolidation, alignment of boundaries with service areas, formation of subsidiary fire districts (cities of El Cerrito and Richmond), and detachment of certain cities from their respective fire districts. These options are summarized in a separate SOI LAFCO staff report and described more fully in the MSR report.

The Commission is responsible for guiding local agencies in the County to overcome these challenges by recommending governance alternatives through its determinations on the required MSR factors and through its upcoming decisions relating to spheres of influence. After adopting the fire and EMS MSR determinations as presented in the attached resolution, the Commission will be asked to consider updates to the fire districts' SOIs. The Commission's vision for future governance of fire and EMS services may also bear upon its decisions in the coming months with respect to updating city SOIs, which are covered in separate sub-regional reviews.

Environmental Analysis

The municipal service review is a study, intended to serve as an informational tool to help LAFCO, local agencies and the public better understand the public service structure in Contra Costa County.

The service review and determinations are Categorically Exempt under §15306, Class 6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Determine that the MSR project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to §15306, Class 6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines,
2. Consider comments presented prior to and during the public hearing and any revisions to the *Fire and Emergency Medical Services MSR* report,
3. Accept the report with any desired changes,
4. Adopt the MSR determinations by resolution attached hereto, and
5. Direct staff to prepare the Final MSR report and make available to all affected agencies and interested parties.

Sincerely,

LOU ANN TEXEIRA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

c: Distribution

Attachment - Draft Resolution with MSR Determinations

RESOLUTION OF THE CONTRA COSTA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

**ADOPTING DETERMINATIONS OF THE
2009 FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW**

WHEREAS, Government Code §56430 requires the Commission to conduct municipal service reviews (MSRs) in order to prepare and update spheres of influence (SOIs) pursuant to Government Code §56425;

WHEREAS, the Commission previously authorized the Fire and Emergency Medical Services MSR to be prepared;

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2009, the Commission conducted a workshop to receive and overview of the Preliminary Draft *Fire and Emergency Medical Services MSR*, received comments, and directed staff to circulate the MSR for public review,

WHEREAS, following the workshop the Public Review Draft MSR was circulated for a 21-day public comment period;

WHEREAS, on April 8, 2009, the Commission conducted public hearings to receive the Final Draft MSR;

WHEREAS, the Commission considered all comments, written and oral, received prior to and during the hearing on April 8, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the MSR report and determinations are Categorical Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to §15306 Class 6 of the CEQA Guidelines.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission does hereby resolve, determine and order as follows:

The Fire and Emergency Medical Services Municipal Services Review determinations attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference are hereby adopted.

* * * * *

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 8th day of April 2009, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

GAYLE UILKEMA, CHAIR, CONTRA COSTA LAFCO

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of a resolution passed and adopted by this Commission on the date stated above

Dated: April 8, 2009

Lou Ann Teixeira, Executive Officer

EXHIBIT A
**FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SUB-REGIONAL
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS**

I. CITY OF EL CERRITO

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the City of El Cerrito fire service area is projected to be comparable with the nearby cities of Pinole, San Pablo, Moraga, and Orinda, but not as rapid as is projected for the cities of Richmond and Hercules. The Del Norte BART station vicinity is an anticipated growth area. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 31,474 in 2008 to 33,930 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth in the City is projected to be comparable to neighboring Richmond, and faster than the job creation rate in the neighboring cities Moraga, Orinda and Pinole. Commercial growth areas involve transit-oriented development near the BART stations. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 5,882 in 2008 to 8,350 in 2030.
- 3) There are no significant development projects or growth plans in the portion of the City's fire service area that is outside its bounds in East Richmond Heights and Kensington.
- 4) Service demand levels are above-average in the City's service area, with 99 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 5) The City's growth planning efforts primarily involve active capital improvement planning over a five-year planning horizon and updating its General Plan. The City does not levy development impact fees to fund fire facilities.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 6) The City operates three staffed fire stations. The station owned by KFPD is in good condition and one City-owned station is in excellent condition. City-owned Station 71 is at capacity and outdated. Replacement of FS 71, along with police headquarters, would cost \$25 million and is presently unfunded. No vehicle or apparatus needs were identified.
- 7) The City plans for long-term capital needs by annually updating a five-year capital improvement plan. The City does not anticipate needing an additional fire station to accommodate growth. However, replacement or expansion of Station 71 would be needed to serve future growth.
- 8) The City needs additional hydrants and fire flow improvements for wildland interface fires, although the associated \$3 million cost is unfunded. Fire flow is adequate in the Kensington area due to recent fire flow improvements.
- 9) The City provides adequate service levels. The City meets response time guidelines the majority of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Due to its small size, the City relies on neighboring providers to marshal adequate resources for fire-fighting. However, the City also contributes similar aid to neighboring providers. The City's staffing level of 1.2 sworn staff per 1,000 people is higher than the countywide average of 0.8, and the Bay Area average of 0.9 for urban fire providers. The City's sworn personnel have appropriate certification levels in firefighting and EMS. Training efforts are adequate, training hours per sworn staff member are

higher than the countywide average. The City's fire prevention service level is high, with all parcels and businesses inspected annually.

- 10) The City's primary service challenges are access challenges in the high fire hazard severity zone where narrow, windy roads restrict access, and combustibility of prevalent unpermitted structures in East Richmond Heights.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 11) The City has the financial ability to provide adequate fire and EMS services. The City's expenditures per population served (\$220) is comparable with the median among fire providers in the County (\$212).
- 12) Fire service costs among smaller providers tend to be higher than among larger providers. The City has promoted efficiencies in its operation by enlarging its service area through contract service to Kensington, by sharing dispatch and training facilities with the City of Richmond and ConFire, and by requiring regular duty staff to complete fire prevention and inspection activities.
- 13) The City has been fiscally conservative, and does not have the significant retiree health care liabilities that most other service providers in the County amassed.
- 14) The City plans for long-term capital needs by annually updating a five-year capital improvement plan. The City should consider implementing development impact fees to ensure that future transit-oriented development does not have negative impacts on service levels.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 15) The City shares its dispatch and training facilities, and participates in resource-sharing through automatic and mutual aid agreements.
- 16) The City of Richmond's dispatch times are substantially longer than industry standards. The City of El Cerrito could reduce response times and improve inter-agency coordination and communication by encouraging consolidation of Richmond fire dispatch operations with ConFire.
- 17) The City is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to attempt to develop a fully interoperable communication system.
- 18) Consolidation of fire service providers in west Contra Costa County would offer further opportunities for sharing of facilities and resources.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 19) The City demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 20) The City FD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 21) Formation of a subsidiary fire district is an option whereby the City could more strategically establish its fire service area without conforming to the City's existing boundary, formalize associated property tax transfers, and maintain City Council control over fire operations.

- 22) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels.

II. CITY OF PINOLE

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the City boundary is projected to be relatively slow compared with neighboring areas, particularly the City of Hercules. Potential residential growth areas include mixed use and infill projects. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 19,193 in 2008 to 21,800 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be somewhat slow in the City compared with neighboring areas. Potential commercial growth areas include a shopping center, a light industrial park, and mixed use projects. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 6,014 in 2008 to 7,560 in 2030.
- 3) Of the City's 13 square mile boundary area, approximately eight square miles are submerged in the Bay. Development of bridges that would require fire protection in this area is unlikely in the future. The City FD does not own a rescue boat and does not provide off-shore services.
- 4) There are no significant development projects or growth plans in the portion of the Pinole fire service area that is outside its bounds in Tara Hills, Bayview or Alhambra Valley.
- 5) Service demand levels are above-average in the Pinole service area, with 85 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 6) The City presently engages in growth planning by preparing a development impact fee nexus study and a three-year capital improvement plan.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 7) Pinole FD operates two staffed fire stations, both of which are in good condition. The location of FS 73 could be more strategic; replacement of the station with one located farther south would be an improvement. Station 73 is not strategically located to optimize response times. No apparatus needs were identified.
- 8) Completion of an emergency easement at the end of Galbreath Rd. to connect it to the Rancho Rd. area in El Sobrante would reduce travel times for Stations 63 and 69 by several miles, and improve response times in this high fire hazard area.
- 9) The City's financial management practices include planning for capital needs by annually updating a three-year capital improvement plan and conducting annual audits and three-year budget projections. The City could better plan sustainable increases in employee compensation packages if it prepared long-term budget projections. The City could best evaluate its service configuration options if it prepares fiscal impact analysis.
- 10) In the urban areas, the City makes best efforts to provide adequate service levels. Pinole FD meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Due to its small size, the City FD relies on neighboring providers to marshal adequate resources for fire-fighting. However, the City also contributes similar aid to neighboring providers

who similarly lack enough staff or apparatus to staff a full response team for structure firefighting. The City's staffing level of 0.7 sworn staff per 1,000 people is somewhat lower than the countywide average (0.8) and the Bay Area average for urban fire providers (0.9). Training may need to be enhanced; training hours per sworn staff member were below-average.

- 11) Alhambra Valley and other outlying eastern portions of the Pinole fire service area lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the urban limit line and development of hydrants is infeasible due to relatively low densities in these areas. The City relies on water tanks on its transported engines, and water tenders from neighboring jurisdictions to provide effective fire-fighting service to these areas.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 12) The City's financial ability to provide adequate fire and EMS services is strained and does not appear to be sustainable. The City's expenditures per population served (\$145) are relatively low compared with the median among fire providers in the County (\$212). Only Crockett-Carquinez FPD and ECCFPD, both of which rely heavily on paid on-call reserves, manage to spend less on a per capita basis.
- 13) Fire service costs among smaller providers tend to be higher than among larger providers. The City has promoted efficiencies in its operation by enlarging its service area through contract service to ConFire, by sharing dispatch and training facilities with ConFire, and by rotating battalion chief duty shifts with other providers.
- 14) Like many other service providers, the City has accumulated debt associated with pension and retiree health benefits. Pinole lacked adequate financial reserves at the end of FY 07-08.
- 15) City spending levels are not sustainable. The City's utility users tax generates 16 percent of general fund revenue and is scheduled to sunset in 2012. The redevelopment agency has positive financial reserves at this time, but its spending authority sunsets in 2015. In addition, the City faces extraordinary costs for its wastewater plant and had historically undercharged for wastewater fees. The City has implemented an expenditure control budgeting plan in an effort to recover. The City plans to finance general fund operating deficits through FY 10-11 with a redevelopment loan and to offer voluntary severance packages.
- 16) The City cannot sustain the costs of staffing two fire stations.
- 17) The City FD's salary levels are the second lowest among urban fire providers in the County. As a result, costs would be even higher if another provider were to take on the costs of operating one of the Pinole stations. Optimal short-term solutions might involve contractual service arrangements or a greater reliance on on-call reserves.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 18) The City practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 19) In many ways, Pinole operations are functionally consolidated with ConFire and RHFPD. Pinole and RHFPD rely on ConFire for dispatch, radio and training facilities. Pinole participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies in RHFPD, ConFire, and Crockett-Carquinez FPD regardless of boundaries. Pinole shares its battalion chief with ConFire and RHFPD, with the

three providers rotating this responsibility on an equal shift basis and training jointly. The three providers also share a ladder truck.

- 20) Pinole provides and receives automatic aid with other ConFire-dispatched agencies. The City exchanges mutual aid response. Joint training in EMS and classroom training in structure firefighting and initial hazardous materials response is conducted with surrounding jurisdictions.
- 21) The City is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to attempt to develop a fully interoperable communication system.
- 22) Consolidation of fire service providers in west Contra Costa County would offer further opportunities for sharing of facilities and resources.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 23) The City demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 24) The City FD demonstrated full accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service-related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 25) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels.
- 26) Annexation of Pinole to ConFire or RHFPD are options that would allow for reconfiguration of fire stations in west County.

Annexation of unincorporated areas in the City's fire service area to the city limits is an option.

III. CITY OF RICHMOND

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the City boundary area through 2030 is projected to be substantially faster than the countywide average, comparable to Hercules and much more rapid than in neighboring Pinole, San Pablo and El Cerrito. Residential growth areas include Point Molate, Hilltop and Marina Way, among others. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 103,577 in 2008 to 128,000 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be above-average in the City with the job creation rate comparable to growth in neighboring San Pablo and El Cerrito, but not as high as growth projected in the City of Hercules. Commercial growth areas include Point Molate, North Richmond and Hilltop. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 42,658 in 2008 to 61,220 in 2030.
- 3) Of the City's 53 square mile boundary area, approximately 23 square miles are submerged in the Bay. The City FD does not have a rescue boat, and does not provide off-shore services. Development of bridges to the City's west is unlikely in the future. It appears unlikely that the City will provide fire protection and EMS services in the submerged portion of its SOI.

- 4) A casino is proposed in the City's SOI in an area to which the City sometimes extends fire and EMS services. There are no other significant development projects or growth plans in the portion of the City's service area that is outside its bounds.
- 5) Service demand levels are above-average in the City' service area, with 101 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 6) The City FD presently engages in growth planning by reviewing development plans, conducting a development impact fee nexus study and annually updating its capital improvement plan.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 7) The City operates seven staffed fire stations, six of which need seismic upgrades. One station needs to be replaced. Another was built over a creek, is shifting and needs to be stabilized or replaced. A third station needs major renovations. In addition, three stations need new roofs. Most of these capital needs are unfunded. The City replaces apparatus on a 15-year cycle, and did not identify apparatus needs.
- 8) The City of Richmond's dispatch times are three times longer than industry standards. Dispatch could be improved by configuring mobile data terminals for compatibility, by developing a dedicated fire respondent at the PSAP, or by consolidating Richmond and ConFire dispatch. The City relies on outdated dispatch processes, and dispatch lacks information on the closest available engine company to an emergency incident. Automatic vehicle locator (AVL) technology would enhance the City's dispatch and cross-border response abilities, and improve response times.
- 9) The City plans for long-term capital needs by annually updating a five-year capital improvement plan, and by preparing a development impact fee nexus study.
- 10) The City will likely need additional fire stations if a proposed waterfront resort and casino in Point Molate or a proposed casino in North Richmond are approved. The Point Molate project would also need hydrants and water main improvements.
- 11) For the most part, the City of Richmond provides adequate service levels. The City meets response time guidelines the majority of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. The City's staffing level of 0.8 sworn staff per 1,000 people is the same as the countywide average, but slightly lower than the Bay Area average (0.9) for urban fire providers. The City's sworn personnel have appropriate certification levels in firefighting and EMS. The City could increase its EMS service level by implementing a paramedic program, as most of the other urban fire departments in the region have done. The City's training efforts are adequate; training hours per sworn staff member are comparable to the countywide average.
- 12) Wildcat Canyon and other outlying eastern portions of the City's service area experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the urban limit line. The City relies on water tanks on its transported engines, and water tenders from neighboring jurisdictions to provide effective fire-fighting service to these areas.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 13) The City has the financial ability to provide adequate services. The City's fire expenditures per population served (\$262) are higher than the median (\$212) among fire providers in the County. Nonetheless, there are unfunded capital needs for the City's aging fire stations.
- 14) The City imposes development impact fees to provide for growth-related fire facility needs. Given that significant growth is projected in the City and the fees are lower than in other jurisdictions, evaluation of development impact fees would be prudent to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels.
- 15) The City implements a number of best management practices in financial planning by conducting annual audits and annually updating five-year capital improvement plans. The City could better plan sustainable increases in employee compensation packages if it prepared long-term budget projections.
- 16) The City's financial reserves appear to be adequate.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 17) The City shares its dispatch and training facilities, and participates in resource-sharing through automatic and mutual aid agreements.
- 18) The City's dispatch times are substantially longer than industry standards. The City could reduce response times and improve inter-agency coordination and communication by consolidating fire dispatch operations with ConFire.
- 19) The City FD is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to attempt to develop a fully interoperable communication system.
- 20) A number of service providers have identified needs for training facilities. Development of joint training facilities could promote cost savings.
- 21) Consolidation of fire service providers in west Contra Costa County would offer further opportunities for sharing of facilities and resources.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 22) The City demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 23) The City FD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 24) Annexation of territory in the City's SOI would promote more logical and efficient fire service boundaries in west County.
- 25) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels.

IV. CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (CONFIRE)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the ConFire boundary is projected to be comparable to the countywide average in Antioch, Concord and Pittsburg, and slower in the remainder of the District. Residential growth is projected to be slowest in San Pablo, Lafayette and Pleasant Hill. Residential growth areas include Sand Canyon, the western Antioch gateway, and the Concord Naval Weapon Station reuse area. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 598,051 in 2008 to 693,584 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be fastest in the Antioch and Pittsburg portions of the ConFire service area, slightly faster than the countywide average in Martinez, comparable to the average in Concord and San Pablo, and slower in the remainder of the District. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 240,908 in 2008 to 320,588 in 2030. Commercial growth areas include the Loveridge area in Pittsburg, the eastern waterfront area in Antioch, Sand Creek, and the North Concord BART station vicinity.
- 3) Service demand levels are average in the District, with 78 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 4) ConFire presently engages in growth planning through its development impact fee nexus study (20-year planning horizon) and five-year capital improvement plan. The District collaborates with land use authorities, particularly the cities of Antioch and Pittsburg, in crafting mitigation measures for new projects. In the long-term, the District anticipates needing a new fire station in Antioch and another in Pittsburg due to projected growth. To accommodate long-term growth, the District plans to add engine companies to existing stations and continue relocating stations to maintain service levels. The District has not prepared a master plan or standards of cover analysis; doing so could improve its long-term planning of optimal fire station locations and the impacts of anticipated development on response times. ConFire reported that it is preparing in 2009 an update to its strategic plan.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 5) ConFire operates 28 staffed fire stations, and two unstaffed stations. Four stations are in excellent condition, six in good condition, 18 in fair condition, and two in poor condition. FS 16 (Lafayette) and 85 (Pittsburg) are in poor condition; replacement of FS 16 is unfunded and replacement of FS 85 is planned for 2009. Twelve stations were built 50 or more years ago, and are obsolete by District standards; three are being replaced and replacement of the other nine stations is not funded or planned.
- 6) To improve response times in Pleasant Hill and Martinez, a new station is needed in Pleasant Hill. Although land has been acquired, the construction and operating costs are not funded. Expansion or replacement of FS 70 (San Pablo) is needed to handle high call volume; the project is not funded.
- 7) ConFire's administrative and training facilities are not located in the same place. ConFire and the County Sheriff have proposed a joint facility on surplus land at Concord Naval Weapons Station; the project is not funded. ConFire fire prevention units are not co-located, a new fire prevention facility in Pittsburg is planned for 2010.
- 8) ConFire replaces apparatus on a regular cycle after 15-20 years use.

- 9) To serve future growth, ConFire anticipates needing a new fire station in Antioch and another in Pittsburg. To accommodate long-term growth, the District plans to add engine companies to existing stations and continue relocating stations to maintain service levels.
- 10) ConFire plans for capital needs through its five-year capital improvement plan, its 20-year development impact fee nexus study, and 11-year financial projections.
- 11) The ConFire service area contains areas in the extremely high fire hazard severity zone (San Pablo Dam Road, west Lafayette and southeast Concord) and in the high fire hazard severity zone (Briones, Clyde, Avon, portions of Lafayette, east Walnut Creek, east Clayton, and outlying areas south of Pittsburg). To protect these vulnerable areas, the District conducts inspections, vegetation management, hydrant testing, and public education campaigns. ConFire adopted defensible space standards in 2006 requiring property owners in vulnerable areas to clear vegetation near structures.
- 12) In the urban areas, ConFire provides adequate service levels. ConFire meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Emergency call processing time does not meet the industry guideline of less than 60 seconds 90 percent of the time. ConFire's staffing level of 0.6 sworn staff per 1,000 people is lower than the countywide average (0.8), as well as the Bay Area average for urban fire providers (0.9). Based on staff certification levels, ConFire staff credentials and skills appear to be adequate. Training hours per sworn staff member are lower than the countywide average, and could be enhanced.
- 13) Fire flow improvements are needed in southwest Walnut Creek, Lafayette and small pockets in Pittsburg.
- 14) The District identified its primary service challenge as financial, with revenue growth over the years not sustaining service levels and with significant unfunded capital needs. The complex boundaries in west County result in inefficient and non-contiguous service areas. The use of a separate dispatch system in the cities of Richmond and El Cerrito slows response times and impedes coordination in west County.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 15) ConFire has the financial ability to provide services, but not to deliver service levels at national standards of four-person crews and five-minute response times. The District is understaffed, has unfunded capital needs and long-deferred capital projects to relocate fire stations and improve services in areas with heavy demand or long response times.
- 16) The District's expenditures per population served (\$198) are somewhat lower than other providers in the County (median of \$212). The District reported that the 2008-9 recession has slowed revenue growth and increased future pension obligations. ConFire has adequate financial reserves. The District has significant long-term debt, most of which funded pension liabilities, as well as OPEB liability.
- 17) The District has implemented development impact fees to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels.
- 18) ConFire relies on property taxes for 88 percent of its revenue, and receives an average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County. Its share of property taxes is 12 percent in cities, the same as the countywide average. Due to extensive redevelopment activities, ConFire's share was lower in Clayton (10 percent), Pittsburg (five percent) and San Pablo (four percent).

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 19) ConFire practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 20) ConFire participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies regardless of boundaries. The District exchanges mutual aid response with the EBRPD, CAL FIRE, and City of Benicia.
- 21) The District shares its dispatch, radio and training facilities with other service providers. ConFire coordinates mutual aid in the County. The District participates in joint training with other providers.
- 22) Facility sharing opportunities include extension of ConFire dispatch service to the cities of Richmond and El Cerrito, or installation of a CAD interface to coordinate response. ConFire could potentially share administrative and training facilities with the County Sheriff at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The District is participating in a collaboration among other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system. There may be opportunities to combine apparatus maintenance functions with other providers.
- 23) There is potential for combining the service areas of ConFire's Lafayette station with MOFPD's east Orinda fire station less than two miles away. MOFPD and ConFire should reevaluate deployment in this area.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 24) ConFire demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 25) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 26) Detachment of western ConFire service areas in San Pablo, El Sobrante, Tara Hills, Bayview, Alhambra Valley, and East Richmond Heights is a government structure option. Such areas could potentially be served by an independent fire district serving either all of west County or serving all portions except the cities of Richmond and Pinole.
- 27) Detachment of the City of San Pablo from ConFire is an option. Detachment would enhance incentives for the City to contribute equitably to financing fire and EMS service levels and enhance local control. The City could potentially be served by a contractual arrangement, a joint powers authority or a consolidated west County fire district.
- 28) Detachment of East Richmond Heights from ConFire could potentially be achieved if the City of El Cerrito were to form a subsidiary fire district. The City of El Cerrito presently serves the area in exchange for ConFire dispatch and radio services.
- 29) Detachment of El Sobrante Hills and other areas surrounded by the City of Richmond from ConFire could potentially be achieved if the City of Richmond were to form a subsidiary fire district. The City of Richmond presently serves the El Sobrante Hills area and provides responses to San Pablo, El Sobrante and North Richmond through an aid agreement with ConFire.

- 30) Annexation of ConFire service areas within ECCFPD bounds is an option. ConFire serves pockets in northwest Brentwood, west Oakley and east of Clayton.
- 31) Annexation of the southernmost portion of Antioch, which contains the proposed Roddy Ranch development, to ConFire is an option. The area is presently within the bounds and service area of ECCFPD. Due to growth in the area, a new station is planned which would allow ConFire to provide faster service to the area and for the entire City of Antioch to be within the bounds of a single fire provider.
- 32) Detachment of ConFire's service area in north Alamo is an option if Alamo voters approve incorporation on March 3, 2009. Annexation of this area to SRVFPD would allow for the entire Alamo community to be served by the same provider.
- 33) Government structure options include annexation of Brentwood and Oakley or annexation of the entire ECCFPD area to ConFire; however, barriers to this option include lower revenue per capita in these cities and ECCFPD compared with the existing ConFire boundary area.
- 34) Annexation of Orinda to ConFire and detachment of that area from MOFPD may be an emerging government structure option.
- 35) Another government structure option is consolidation of all fire providers within the County. This option may be infeasible due to variations in funding and service levels between the various providers.

V. CROCKETT CARQUINEZ FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (CCFPD)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the CCFPD boundary is projected to be relatively slow compared with neighboring areas. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 3,641 in 2008 to 3,927 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be average in CCFPD with the job creation rate projected to be comparable to the countywide average. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 1,118 in 2008 to 1,549 in 2030.
- 3) There are no significant development projects or growth plans in the portion of the Crockett-Carquinez FPD service area that is outside its bounds in RHFPD.
- 4) Service demand levels are above-average in the District, with 122 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 5) CCFPD does not presently engage in growth planning.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 6) CCFPD operates two partially staffed fire stations, and an unstaffed station. Two stations are in good to excellent condition. The primary station in Crockett was built in 1957, and needs boiler and curb improvements.

- 7) The District does not plan for long-term capital needs, prepare a capital improvement plan, or participate in development impact fee nexus studies. The District does not presently anticipate needing an additional fire station. CCFPD does not anticipate expand fire station capacity to serve future growth, as minimal future growth is anticipated.
- 8) In the urban areas, CCFPD provides minimally adequate service levels. RHFPD has the most aggressive response time requirements and goals among fire service providers in the County, with its goals in line with industry standards. CCFPD faces challenges in meeting response time guidelines due to the relatively long turnout times associated with on-call fire service. Due to its small size, CCFPD relies on neighboring providers to marshal adequate resources for fire-fighting. CCFPD's staffing level is relatively high due to the large number of on-call firefighters who are not on duty most of the time. CCFPD could increase its EMS service level by ensuring that all sworn personnel achieve EMT certification. Training could also be enhanced; training hours per sworn staff member are lower than the countywide average.
- 9) Port Costa and other outlying eastern portions of CCFPD lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the urban limit line and development of hydrants is infeasible due to relatively low densities in these areas. CCFPD relies on water tanks on its transported engines, and a water tender to provide effective fire-fighting service to these areas.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 10) CCFPD has the financial ability to provide minimally adequate services. The District's expenditures per population served (\$130) are lower than other providers in the County (median of \$212). Nonetheless, the District relies on cost-saving measures to economize on expenses, has no debt and has adequate financial reserves.
- 11) CCFPD relies on property taxes for 83 percent of its revenue, and receives a slightly below-average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 12) CCFPD practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 13) In some ways, CCFPD operations are functionally consolidated with ConFire. CCFPD relies on ConFire for dispatch, radio and training facilities. CCFPD participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies in RHFPD and ConFire regardless of boundaries.
- 14) The District provides and receives automatic aid with RHFPD, and with other ConFire-dispatched agencies. The District exchanges mutual aid response with the City of Vallejo. Joint training with surrounding jurisdictions is conducted as the on-call firefighters schedules permit.
- 15) Consolidation of fire service providers in west Contra Costa County would offer further opportunities for sharing of facilities and resources.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 16) CCFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, and disclosure practices. As a County-dependent district, accountability is constrained by a lack of local control;

however, the District does have a local advisory body. Due to limited financial resources and staffing, the District does not conduct constituent outreach efforts. The District has limited transparency, although basic financial information is available online through the County's website.

- 17) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 18) Detachment of territory served by RHFPD in Crockett-Carquinez FPD and annexation of the area to RHFPD is a government structure option. The boundary between RHFPD and Crockett-Carquinez FPD predates construction of Cummings Skyway, which has become the effective dividing line between the districts in terms of their actual first-in service areas.
- 19) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels. This option has been entertained in the past, but encountered opposition from the cities of Richmond and El Cerrito. A feasible option is consolidation of RHFPD, Pinole, and adjacent ConFire service areas. Crockett-Carquinez FPD could potentially be included at its existing service levels. RHFPD is the only existing independent special district among these providers, and places a high value on local governance and accountability. Consolidation could take the legal form of annexation of these areas to RHFPD, along with renaming of the District. Alternatively, it could be accomplished by forming a new district into which the districts would be consolidated and other areas annexed.

VI. EAST CONTRA COSTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (ECCFPD)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the ECCFPD boundary is projected to be significantly faster than the countywide average. Brentwood is projected to be the fastest-growing city in the County. Growth in Oakley is projected to be on par with neighboring Antioch and Pittsburg. Residential growth areas include Trilogy at the Vineyards, Rose Garden, Palmilla, Cypress Corridor, the Lakes and Cecchini Ranch in Discovery Bay, Byron Airport, and Delta Coves in Bethel Island. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 106,386 in 2008 to 158,515 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is also projected to be significantly faster in ECCFPD compared with the countywide average. Oakley and Brentwood are projected to have the highest job creation rates in the County, outpacing neighboring Antioch and Pittsburg. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 17,480 in 2008 to 34,251 in 2030.
- 3) Service demand levels are somewhat below-average in the District, with 65 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 4) ECCFPD has engaged in growth planning by preparing a master plan and recommending infrastructure projects to the cities of Brentwood and Oakley for their consideration in programming development impact fee spending priorities. The District reported that it is preparing in 2009 a development impact fee nexus study focused on long-term infrastructure and financing needs. Once implemented, this will represent an improvement, as growth planning has not been comprehensive and development impact fees have not been consistently and uniformly collected in the past.
- 5) The City of Brentwood and the County have adopted policies that fire stations be within 1.5 miles of urban development, within a 3-5 minute response time, and staffed with at least three firefighters

in urban areas. However, these standards have not been achievable to date within the resource constraints of the District.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 6) The District's facility needs have evolved rapidly in the last decade due to consolidation of formerly separate fire districts, a shift from on-call to staffed stations in much of the service area, and rapid growth. There are as many stations and personnel serving the Discovery Bay and Byron area (with a combined population of about 13,368 and 673 annual service calls) as the cities of Oakley and Brentwood (with a combined population of about 84,000 and 3,500 annual service calls). A number of the fire stations are no longer strategically located to minimize both costs and response times. At a minimum, FS 54, FS 58 and FS 93 (Oakley) are not strategically located.
- 7) New or relocated fire stations are needed to serve growth; the cities plan to finance building new stations with development impact fees collected and programmed by the cities. Hydrants will also need to be installed in growth areas to provide adequate fire flow. Other growth-related capital needs have not yet been identified. The District could improve its capital planning for growth by completing and implementing the development impact fee nexus study, which the District reported to be in progress in 2009.
- 8) ECCFPD operates eight staffed fire stations, and contracts with CAL FIRE for service from a ninth station. Two stations are in excellent condition, three in fair condition, and three in poor condition. FS 54 (Brentwood), 58 (Discovery Bay) and 95 (Bethel Island) are in poor condition.
- 9) Unfunded capital needs include relocation of fire stations and expansion or relocation of the administrative building. Relocation of fire stations could be funded partly with development impact fees, although existing fund balances would not finance the reconfiguration that is needed and impact fees may not finance capital needs for existing residents.
- 10) ECCFPD replaces apparatus on a regular cycle after 15-20 years use.
- 11) In the urban areas, ECCFPD provides minimally adequate service levels. ECCFPD staffs fire stations with two personnel per station regardless of whether a station is located in an urban area or outlying town; by contrast, four personnel per apparatus is the recommended urban staffing level. The District does not offer paramedic services. Response times meet certain guidelines some of the time, but fall short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. ECCFPD's staffing level of 0.5 sworn staff per 1,000 people is substantially lower than the countywide average (0.8), as well as the Bay Area average for urban fire providers (0.9). Based on staff certification levels, ECCFPD staff credentials and skills appear to be adequate. Training hours per sworn staff member are lower than the countywide average.
- 12) Outlying portions of ECCFPD lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the countywide urban limit line. ECCFPD relies on water tanks on its engines, water tenders and drafting from water tanks to provide fire-fighting service to these areas.
- 13) The District's primary service challenges are inadequate funding and staffing, access challenges in outlying area, and a geographic location that makes it impossible for fire departments in neighboring counties to help with timely backfilling of District stations when District personnel receive simultaneous service calls.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 14) ECCFPD does not have the financial ability to provide adequate services at an urban service level. The District's expenditures per population served (\$139) are lower than other providers in the County (median of \$212).
- 15) The District reported that the 2008-9 recession has slowed revenue growth and increased future pension obligations. The District anticipates declining revenue in the near-term due to the disproportionately high impact of the housing market decline on property values in the area.
- 16) The District economizes on expenses by understaffing urban fire stations and administrative functions, by using on-call personnel to supplement staffing, and by paying salaries that are substantially lower than in other fire departments in the County.
- 17) ECCFPD appears to have adequate financial reserves for contingencies. The District has a relatively low level of debt, although it has begun accumulating unfunded pension and retiree health care liabilities. .
- 18) The District should implement development impact fees to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels, and is presently planning to do so in 2009.
- 19) ECCFPD relies on property taxes for 94 percent of its revenue, and receives a below-average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County. Its share of property taxes (net of redevelopment) is seven percent in Brentwood, five percent in Oakley, and nine percent in unincorporated areas; by comparison, the average fire district share was 12 percent in incorporated areas and 13 percent in unincorporated areas. There are no feasible opportunities whereby the District would elicit a portion of the property tax share received by other local agencies (e.g., the cities, the County or the schools).
- 20) Financing opportunities include district-wide assessments or assessments in urban areas that form zones of benefit and provide higher service levels to the assessed areas. Imposing an assessment would require approval by the voters. Another opportunity for financing appropriate service levels is to shift more resources to the urban areas.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 21) ECCFPD practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 22) The District relies on ConFire for training, dispatch and radio facilities. As a ConFire-dispatched agency, the District participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies regardless of boundaries. This most often involves exchanging automatic aid with ConFire's Antioch and Pittsburg station areas.
- 23) ECCFPD exchanges mutual aid response with Alameda County Fire District and occasionally with San Joaquin County.
- 24) The District relies on ConFire for building review and fire investigation services. The District contracts with the County for legal, financial, human resources and information technology services.

- 25) The District is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system. The District did not identify other facility-sharing opportunities.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 26) ECCFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices. The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service-related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 27) The District has not succeeded in implementing governance changes that had been recommended by LAFCO at the time of consolidation. Specifically, implementation of a governing body representative of the community has not yet occurred.
- 28) The District would benefit from conducting long-term growth and facility planning to identify long-term capital needs in a proactive and thoughtful fashion.
- 29) Detachment of the cities of Brentwood and/or Oakley is a government structure option. Associated service options would involve annexation to ConFire, contract service with ConFire or CAL FIRE, or establishment of an independent fire department.
- 30) Consolidation of ECCFPD with ConFire is a government structure option.
- 31) Detachment of the southern portion of the City of Antioch bounds and SOI, and annexation of the area to ConFire is an option.
- 32) Detachment of areas in the City of Clayton SOI from ECCFPD and annexation of the area to ConFire is an option to realign the boundary with the existing service area.

VII. KENSINGTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (KFPD)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the KFPD boundary is projected to be minimal. Future growth is expected to consist of limited infill opportunities. There are no planned or proposed developments in the community. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 5,009 in 2008 to 5,123 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be sluggish in KFPD with the job creation rate projected to be less than the countywide average. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 866 in 2008 to 1,105 in 2030.
- 3) There are no development projects or growth plans in the portion of the KFPD service area that is outside its bounds at the EBMUD reservoir location.
- 4) Service demand levels are average in the District, with 67 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 5) KFPD does not conduct growth planning due to the built-out nature of the community.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 6) KFPD owns one fire station, which is staffed by the City of El Cerrito. The station was built in 1971, has twice been remodeled and is in good condition. KFPD did not identify any apparatus needs. The District sets aside funds annually toward future fire station remodeling needs and apparatus replacement.
- 7) KFPD plans for long-term capital needs by occasionally preparing a capital improvement plan. The District does not anticipate needing additional facilities due to the limited growth potential.
- 8) KFPD provides adequate service levels. KFPD meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Due to its small size, KFPD's service provider relies on neighboring providers to marshal adequate resources for fire-fighting. However, KFPD's service provider also contributes similar aid to neighboring providers. KFPD's staffing level of 2.2 sworn staff per 1,000 people is higher than the countywide average of 0.8 and the Bay Area average of 0.9 for urban fire providers. Based on staff certification levels, sworn staff credentials and skills appear to be solid. Training hours per sworn staff member are higher than the countywide average.
- 9) The KFPD service areas contain areas in the extremely high fire hazard and high fire hazard severity zones along its eastern boundary. To protect these vulnerable areas, the District conducts comprehensive vegetation inspections, hydrant testing, and public education campaigns. The District implemented a vegetation management program, and partners with EBRPD to diminish the wildfire threat.
- 10) There are no differences in service levels within the District, other than differences between properties in distance from the fire station.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 11) KFPD has the financial ability to provide adequate services. The District's expenditures per population served (\$546) are higher than other providers in the County (median of \$212). The District has no debt other than the OPEB liability it is pre-funding, and has adequate financial reserves.
- 12) KFPD relies on property taxes for 88 percent of its revenue. The District receives an above-average share of property taxes (30 percent), which is higher than any other fire district in the County.
- 13) KFPD relies on assessments for seven percent of its revenues. The assessment lacks an inflation escalator, and was most recently increased in 1980. The District does not anticipate needing to increase the assessment within the next five years.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 14) KFPD practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 15) KFPD operations are functionally consolidated with the City of El Cerrito. El Cerrito provides contract service to the District. As a result, KFPD relies on El Cerrito's dispatch providers at the City of Richmond and ConFire, and indirectly participates in closest-resource dispatching with ConFire-dispatched agencies.

- 16) The City of El Cerrito exchanges mutual aid response with the cities of Berkeley, Richmond, Albany, and Oakland, ConFire, East Bay Regional Parks District, and CAL FIRE. The District's Station 65 is shared with the local police and community services district. Through its contract with El Cerrito, the District relies on the City of Richmond dispatch and training facilities.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 17) KFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 18) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 19) Annexation of territory served by KFPD at the EBMUD reservoir is a government structure option.
- 20) Consolidation of KFPD with the Kensington Community Services District (KCSD) is an option. KCSD provides law enforcement, solid waste collection and park services to a boundary area that includes both the KFPD boundary area and the EBMUD reservoir. Consolidation of KFPD with KCSD would streamline local government, and offer the community more options on allocating public safety funds.
- 21) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels. This option has been entertained in the past, but encountered opposition from the cities of Richmond and El Cerrito. A feasible option is consolidation of RHFPD, Pinole, and adjacent ConFire service areas. Crockett-Carquinez FPD could potentially be included at its existing service levels.

VIII. MORAGA ORINDA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (MOFPD)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the MOFPD boundary is projected to be relatively low compared with the countywide average. Growth in Moraga is expected to outpace growth in Orinda and neighboring Lafayette, but will be slower than in neighboring Walnut Creek. Residential growth areas include Bollinger Canyon, Palos Colorados, Rancho Laguna, Indian Valley, Orinda Village, and Montanera Gateway. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 34,854 in 2008 to 37,328 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be relatively low in MOFPD compared with the countywide average, and significantly higher than in neighboring areas. Job creation in Moraga is expected to outpace Orinda and neighboring Lafayette, and to be comparable with neighboring Walnut Creek. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 12,798 in 2008 to 13,922 in 2030.
- 3) Service demand levels are average in the District, with 80 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 4) MOFPD presently engages in growth planning by collaborating with land use authorities—the cities of Moraga and Orinda—in crafting mitigation measures for new projects and forecasting their financial effects on the District. The District estimated the impacts of station reconfigurations and anticipated development on response times in 2006. MOFPD reported that it is preparing in 2009 a

development impact fee nexus study focused on long-term infrastructure and financing needs. Once implemented, this will represent an improvement, as growth planning has not been comprehensive and development impact fees have not been consistently and uniformly collected in the past.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 5) MOFPD operates five staffed fire stations. Three stations are in good to excellent condition. Two are aged and appear to need seismic retrofit; replacement of the two stations would cost \$16 million. Unfunded capital plans include a new \$10 million administration facility and a training center. Due to slow revenue growth and the impact of the 2008 financial collapse on the District's pension liabilities, MOFPD is presently deferring infrastructure spending. MOFPD replaces apparatus on a regular cycle after 10-20 years use.
- 6) In Orinda, there are water mains that need to be upgraded and hydrants in some areas have low pressure and capacity. Local voters have rejected bond ballot measures three times in recent years to improve water pressure for firefighting.
- 7) MOFPD plans for capital needs through its annual budget process and periodic facility needs assessments. Future development in Bollinger Canyon, which is located in a high fire hazard severity zone, would require an additional fire station to provide adequate response times. Other growth-related capital needs have not yet been identified. The District could improve its capital planning for growth by completing and implementing the development impact fee nexus study, which the District reported to be in progress in 2009.
- 8) The MOFPD service areas contain extensive areas in the extremely high fire hazard severity zone (Canyon and western Orinda) and in the high fire hazard severity zone (the remainder of Orinda, Bollinger Canyon and outlying areas in Moraga). To protect these vulnerable areas, the District conducts comprehensive inspections, hydrant testing, and public education campaigns. MOFPD requires sprinklers on new construction and remodels, and requires property owners to manage vegetation. The District's recent fire prevention activities include a wildfire risk assessment and development of a vegetation management program.
- 9) In the urban areas, MOFPD provides adequate service levels. MOFPD meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. MOFPD's staffing level of 1.9 sworn staff per 1,000 people is substantially higher than the countywide average (0.8), as well as the Bay Area median for urban fire providers (0.9). Unlike most other fire departments, MOFPD provides ambulance transport services directly; however its staffing level is still substantially higher than SRVFPD (also an ambulance provider) with 1.2 sworn staff per 1,000 people and the Bay Area median for fire departments with ambulance service (1.4). Based on staff certification levels, MOFPD staff credentials and skills appear to be adequate. Training hours per sworn staff member are higher than the countywide average.
- 10) Bollinger Canyon, Canyon and other outlying portions of MOFPD lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the countywide urban limit line and development of hydrants would be expensive due to relatively low densities in these areas. MOFPD relies on water tanks on its engines, water tenders and drafting from water tanks to provide fire-fighting service to these areas.

- 11) The District identified service challenges in Orinda area due to decayed roads and lack of street maintenance and access challenges on steep, windy, narrow roads, particularly in the El Toyonal area.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 12) MOFPD has the financial ability to provide adequate services. The District's expenditures per population served (\$566) are higher than other providers in the County (median of \$212). The District reported that the 2008-9 recession has slowed revenue growth and increased future pension obligations, and that the District is adjusting by deferring capital expenditures and negotiating sustainable employee benefits. Otherwise, the District did not identify cost-saving measures to economize on expenses. MOFPD has adequate financial reserves. The District has significant long-term debt, most of which funded pension liabilities, as well as OPEB liability.
- 13) The District should implement development impact fees to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels, and is presently planning to do so in 2009.
- 14) MOFPD relies on property taxes for 85 percent of its revenue, and receives an above-average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County. Its share of property taxes is 23 percent in Orinda and 19 percent in Moraga; by comparison, the average fire district share was 12 percent in incorporated areas. The City of Orinda faces financial pressures, in part because voters have repeatedly rejected bond measures intended to fund street and water infrastructure needs. A portion of the MOFPD property tax share is a potential source of funds for the City.
- 15) MOFPD relies on ambulance fees for five percent of its revenues, and its fees are comparable to the countywide and regional average. MOFPD relies on a special tax for five percent of its revenues, and most recently increased the tax rate in FY 08-09.
- 16) Financing opportunities include debt financing approaches, such as bonds, capital leases and private loans.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 17) MOFPD practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 18) MOFPD relies on ConFire for dispatch and radio facilities. As a ConFire-dispatched agency, the District participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies regardless of boundaries. This most often involves exchanging automatic aid with ConFire's Lafayette and Walnut Creek station areas.
- 19) The District exchanges mutual aid response with the cities of Berkeley and Oakland and CAL FIRE.
- 20) The District relies on advanced training facilities at ConFire and the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department. Joint training in EMS and classroom training in structure firefighting and initial hazardous materials response is conducted with surrounding jurisdictions.
- 21) The District did not identify facility sharing opportunities. The District is not participating in a collaboration among other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system.

- 22) There is potential for combining the service areas of its east Orinda fire station with a neighboring ConFire station less than two miles away. MOFPD and ConFire should reevaluate deployment in this area.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 23) MOFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 24) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 25) The District would benefit from benchmarking its costs against comparable service providers to explore cost savings and promote efficiency.
- 26) Detachment of the City of Orinda from MOFPD is a government structure option. Separate Moraga and Orinda fire districts consolidated in 1997. A relatively high share of Orinda property taxes accrues to MOFPD, and Orinda is seeking revenue sources to address unfunded street, drainage and water infrastructure needs. A citizen task force identified the MOFPD property tax revenue as a potential source of funds. Associated government structure options would involve detachment and annexation to ConFire, contract service with ConFire or establishment of an independent fire department.
- 27) Annexation of MOFPD to ConFire is a government structure option. ConFire is situated adjacent to MOFPD, and is the closest provider with access to the urban areas in the District. MOFPD has relatively high service costs, and could potentially benefit from cost savings afforded by efficiencies available to a larger fire department.

IX. RODEO HERCULES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the RHFPD boundary is projected to be relatively high compared with neighboring areas, particularly in the City of Hercules. Residential growth areas include the waterfront in both Rodeo and Hercules, and downtown Hercules. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 32,317 in 2008 to 37,699 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be particularly rapid in RHFPD with the job creation rate projected to be double the countywide average, and significantly higher than in neighboring areas. Commercial growth areas include the planned transit center and proposed ferry in Hercules, waterfront areas in both Rodeo and Hercules, and the Hilltown area in Hercules. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 4,530 in 2008 to 7,954 in 2030.
- 3) Of the RHFPD's 32 square mile boundary area, approximately 14 square miles are submerged in the Bay. Development of bridges in this area is unlikely in the future. Development of a ferry terminal is proposed in Hercules along Bayfront Blvd., and will extend out over the Bay. RHFPD anticipates providing shore-based fire and EMS services to the proposed ferry.
- 4) There are no significant development projects or growth plans in the portion of the RHFPD service area that is outside its bounds in Crockett-Carquinez FPD.

- 5) Service demand levels are average in the District, with 76 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 6) RHFPD presently engages in growth planning by collaborating with land use authorities—the City of Hercules and the County—in joint preparation of development impact fee nexus studies focused on long-term infrastructure and financing needs. This represents an improvement, as past growth planning was not as coordinated and development impact fees were not consistently collected in the past for new growth in Rodeo.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 7) RHFPD operates two staffed fire stations. Both stations were built in the 1990s and are in good condition. RHFPD replaces apparatus on a 15-year cycle.
- 8) RHFPD plans for long-term capital needs by annually updating a 10-year capital improvement plan, and by collaborating with land use authorities in development impact fee nexus studies. The District does not presently anticipate needing an additional fire station. To serve future growth, RHFPD plans to expand capacity at FS 75 by enlarging the apparatus bay and sleeping quarters.
- 9) In the urban areas, RHFPD provides adequate service levels. RHFPD has the most aggressive response time requirements and goals among fire service providers in the County, with its goals in line with industry standards. RHFPD meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Due to its small size, RHFPD relies on neighboring providers to marshal adequate resources for fire-fighting. However, RHFPD also contributes similar aid to neighboring providers who similarly lack enough staff or apparatus to staff a full response team for structure firefighting. RHFPD's staffing level of 0.7 full-time sworn staff per 1,000 people are somewhat lower than the countywide average (0.8) and Bay Area average (0.9) for urban fire providers. Training could be enhanced; training hours per sworn staff member are lower than the countywide average.
- 10) Franklin Canyon and other outlying eastern portions of RHFPD lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the countywide urban limit line and development of hydrants is infeasible due to relatively low densities in these areas. RHFPD relies on water tanks on its transported engines, and water tenders from neighboring jurisdictions to provide fire-fighting service to these areas.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 11) RHFPD has the financial ability to provide adequate services. The District's expenditures per population served (\$170) are lower than other providers in the County (median of \$212). Nonetheless, the District has successfully obtained grant funding to fund service level increases in recent years, relies on cost-saving measures to economize on expenses, has a relatively low level of debt and has adequate financial reserves.
- 12) The District should increase development impact fees to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels, and is presently planning such an increase in coordination with land use authorities.
- 13) RHFPD relies on property taxes for two-thirds of its revenue, and receives a below-average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County. Due to extensive redevelopment

project areas, future growth could potentially erode the District's tax base. Given the District's funding level is already somewhat below-average, RHFPD should conduct long-term financial projections to ensure appropriate operational financing to serve planned growth.

- 14) RHFPD relies on assessments for 25 percent of its revenues. The assessment lacks an inflation escalator, and was most recently increased in 1998. RHFPD should submit to local voters an increase the assessment to adjust for inflation and include an automatic inflation escalator to ensure that this funding source is not eroded over time.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 15) RHFPD practices facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 16) In many ways, RHFPD operations are functionally consolidated with ConFire and Pinole. RHFPD and Pinole rely on ConFire for dispatch, radio and training facilities. RHFPD participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies in Pinole, ConFire, and Crockett-Carquinez FPD regardless of boundaries. The District shares its battalion chief with ConFire and Pinole, with the three providers rotating this responsibility on an equal shift basis. The District shares a ladder truck with the City of Pinole and ConFire.
- 17) The District provides and receives automatic aid with Crockett-Carquinez FPD, and with other ConFire-dispatched agencies. The District exchanges mutual aid response with the cities of Pinole and Richmond, ConFire, East Bay Regional Parks District, and CAL FIRE. Joint training in EMS and classroom training in structure firefighting and initial hazardous materials response is conducted with surrounding jurisdictions.
- 18) The District is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system. There is a possibility of sharing the RHFPD facilities with Los Medanos College to provide a fire academy in west Contra Costa County.
- 19) Consolidation of fire service providers in west Contra Costa County would offer further opportunities for sharing of facilities and resources.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 20) RHFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 21) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 22) Annexation of territory served in Crockett-Carquinez FPD to RHFPD bounds is a government structure option. The boundary between RHFPD and Crockett-Carquinez FPD predates construction of Cummings Skyway, which has become the effective dividing line between the districts in terms of their actual first-in service areas.
- 23) Consolidation among west county fire providers is an option to improve the efficiency of service areas, promote facility-sharing and improve service levels. This option has been entertained in the past, but encountered opposition from the cities of Richmond and El Cerrito. A feasible option is

consolidation of RHFPD, Pinole, and adjacent ConFire service areas. Crockett-Carquinez FPD could potentially be included at its existing service levels. RHFPD is the only existing independent special district among these providers, and places a high value on local governance and accountability. Consolidation could take the legal form of annexation of these areas to RHFPD, along with renaming of the District. Alternatively, it could be accomplished by forming a new district into which the districts would be consolidated and other areas annexed.

- 24) Detachment of submerged territory in the San Pablo Bay is an option. The area is served by the U.S. Coast Guard. RHFPD provides only landside services and lacks a boat. Retention of a modest portion of the Bay, such as a one-eighth mile buffer, would appear adequate.

X. SAN RAMON VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (SRVFPD)

Growth and population projections

- 1) Residential population growth in the SRVFPD boundary is projected to be somewhat faster than the countywide average, with growth in San Ramon substantially faster and in Danville substantially slower than the countywide average. San Ramon is the second fastest-growing city in the County after the City of Brentwood. Residential growth areas include the Faria preserve, Dougherty Valley and the portion of Bollinger Canyon inside the urban limit line. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the population from 130,411 in 2008 to 155,324 in 2030.
- 2) Commercial growth is projected to be somewhat slower in SRVFPD compared with the countywide average. Job creation in San Ramon is expected to outpace Danville and Alamo, and to be comparable with the countywide average. The City Center project in San Ramon is the most significant commercial growth area. In the long-term, growth is expected to increase the job base from 65,217 in 2008 to 79,601 in 2030.
- 3) Service demand levels are below-average in the District, with 56 incidents annually per 1,000 people compared with the countywide average of 79 incidents per 1,000.
- 4) SRVFPD presently engages in growth planning by collaborating with land use authorities—the cities of San Ramon and Danville and the County—in crafting mitigation measures for new projects and forecasting their financial effects on the District. The District projects long-term capital needs through a four-year business plan last updated in 2005. SRVFPD does not prepare a long-term capital improvement plan or development impact fee nexus study for purposes of planning growth-related infrastructure and financing needs; implementing these measures would improve the District's growth planning.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 5) SRVFPD operates nine staffed fire stations and two stations served by on-call firefighters. Ten of the eleven stations are in good to excellent condition. FS 32 in Alamo is aged and is scheduled for replacement in 2012. An additional station is needed in Alamo. FS 39 is not strategically located, and may need to be relocated to improve response times in southwest San Ramon. Unfunded capital plans include a new training facility. SRVFPD replaces apparatus on a regular cycle after 7-20 years use.
- 6) Additional fire stations and water improvements are needed in growth areas; developers are required to mitigate growth impacts by contributing facility costs.

- 7) SRVFPD plans for capital needs through its annual budget process and a four-year business plan last updated in 2005. The District could improve its capital planning for growth by completing and implementing a development impact fee nexus study. Such planning efforts would represent an improvement, and could promote more comprehensive growth planning.
- 8) The SRVFPD service areas contain some areas in the very high fire hazard severity zone (Mt. Diablo State Park) and extensive areas in the high fire hazard severity zone, including Blackhawk, Bishop Ranch and Las Trampas Regional Wilderness). To protect these vulnerable areas, the District has adopted sprinkler requirements, and conducts inspections of properties with past compliance challenges or complaints. Vegetation fires in most of these areas are the responsibility of CAL FIRE and EBRPD.
- 9) In the urban areas, SRVFPD provides adequate service levels. SRVFPD meets response time guidelines much of the time, but falls short of meeting guidelines 90 percent of the time. Although 911 call processing times do not meet industry standards, SRVFPD is faster than ConFire and City of Richmond. SRVFPD's staffing level of 1.3 sworn staff per 1,000 people is substantially higher than the countywide average (0.9), and slightly lower than the Bay Area median for urban fire providers with ambulance transport responsibilities (1.4). Based on staff certification levels, SRVFPD staff credentials and skills appear to be adequate. Training efforts appear to be adequate; training hours per sworn staff member are higher than the countywide average.
- 10) Morgan Territory and other outlying portions of SRVFPD lack fire hydrants, and experience longer response times due to distance from fire stations and the hilly topography. Growth potential in these areas is constrained by the countywide urban limit line and development of hydrants would be expensive due to relatively low densities in these areas. SRVFPD relies on water tanks on its engines, water tenders and drafting from water tanks to provide fire-fighting service to these areas.
- 11) The District identified service challenges in west Danville, Diablo and Tassajara where narrow, windy roads create access challenges. Outlying areas in Morgan Territory and Mt. Diablo experience longer response times. Areas outside the urban limit line are expensive to serve due to sparse development and high fire hazards.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 12) SRVFPD has the financial ability to provide adequate services. The District's expenditures per population served (\$393) are higher than other providers in the County (median of \$212). The District reported that the 2008-9 recession has slowed revenue growth and increased future pension obligations. The District did not identify cost-saving measures to economize on expenses. SRVFPD has adequate financial reserves. The District has significant long-term debt, most of which funded facilities, as well as unfunded pension and OPEB liability.
- 13) The District should implement development impact fees to ensure that new development does not have negative impacts on service levels.
- 14) SRVFPD relies on property taxes for 91 percent of its revenue, and receives an above-average share of property taxes compared with other fire districts in the County. Its share of property taxes is 17 percent in unincorporated areas, 16 percent in Danville and 13 percent in San Ramon; by comparison, the average fire district share was 12 percent in incorporated areas.
- 15) SRVFPD relies on ambulance fees for three percent of its revenues.
- 16) Financing opportunities include charging for services provided in Alameda County.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 17) SRVFPD practices limited facility-sharing and regional collaboration to economize on costs and improve service levels.
- 18) SRVFPD participates in closest-resource dispatching, and responds to emergencies regardless of boundaries. This most often involves exchanging automatic aid with ConFire's Lafayette and Walnut Creek station areas.
- 19) The District exchanges mutual aid response with Livermore-Pleasanton FD, and occasionally with fire departments in other counties.
- 20) The District is collaborating with other public safety providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop a fully interoperable communication system.
- 21) Joint training in EMS and classroom training in structure firefighting and initial hazardous materials response is conducted with west County fire departments and EBRPD.
- 22) The District did not provide studies or analysis of the potential for combining fire station service areas. Financing constraints could lead the District to reevaluate its station configuration options in the future.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 23) SRVFPD demonstrated accountability based on the measures of contested elections, constituent outreach efforts, transparency, and disclosure practices.
- 24) The District demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service-related information in response to LAFCO requests.
- 25) The District could benefit from benchmarking its costs against comparable service providers to explore cost savings and promote efficiency.
- 26) Annexation of a portion of Alamo is a government structure option. The affected area is a small portion of the unincorporated community of Alamo in ConFire bounds.
- 27) Annexation of territory served in Alameda County is an option. SRVFPD provides service to the northern part of Crow Canyon and to northern Dublin, but does not receive compensation for these services. Annexation would promote compensation for these services. Annexation may not be relevant if the District relocates a fire station as planned.

XI. COUNTY SERVICE AREA EM-1 (CSA EM-1)

Growth and population projections

- 1) The residential population of the CSA is all Contra Costa County residents. The projected population growth rate within the CSA from 2008 to 2030 is 20 percent, according to 2007 ABAG projections. The projected job growth rate from 2005 to 2030 is 46 percent.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

- 2) No capacity constraints or infrastructure deficiencies were identified for the CSA.
- 3) A significant service challenge for the CSA is assisting Richmond to achieve ALS staffing levels for first responders.
- 4) Based on response times, paramedic ambulance service within Contra Costa County is generally adequate. The only instance where requirements were not met in 2007 was in April, when ERZ A (Richmond) achieved response times less than 95 percent of the time. Moraga-Orinda FPD response times are likely compliant.
- 5) CSA funds have been used to increase the number of paramedic ambulance units available for emergencies, enhance first responder training, equipment and supplies, upgrade radio, dispatch and communication systems, and establish an electronic patient care record system.

Financial ability of agencies to provide services

- 6) The CSA provides adequate services given financing levels; however, assessment levels are capped at current levels and provide no increases for inflation. A ballot measure would be required to adjust assessments for historical inflation, and should include an automatic inflation adjustment for the future so that voters do not need to be asked repeatedly to sustain funding levels.
- 7) The CSA reports having sufficient financial reserves at the present time, but is concerned about financing in the long-term. The current financing level is not adequate to deliver long-term services given historical inflation patterns.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

- 8) The CSA shares facilities with the Contra Costa Health Services Department, as the CSA is managed by the Emergency Medical Services Division.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

- 9) The CSA demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service-related information in response to LAFCO requests. The CSA achieves public accountability by maintaining a comprehensive website, conducting community outreach, and publishing an annual report with accomplishments for the year.